

6 QUICK TIPS!

To Beat the Summer Heat

**Tiffany Baca, Public Affairs Manager
Municipal Water District of Orange County**

As temperatures heat up, Orange County residents are looking for ways to cool down. While packing up and heading out to find shade at the beach or local park resonates with many of us, according to a poll referenced in Newsweek last year, nearly half of Americans can't wait for summer so they can just chill at home. Interestingly enough, the top five (5) reasons poll-takers claim are the cause for their discomfort outdoors are probably the top (5) reasons for plants too. Sweating (transpiration), bugs, sunburns, and dehydration all made the list.

Did you know? The average human body is about 60% water, while plants are approximately 90%. Both people and plants must stay hydrated and comfortable in their environments to thrive. This can be more challenging the hotter it gets. The good news is there are things you can do to create and maintain healthy living conditions where you can relax and enjoy your water-smart surroundings while enduring the dog days of summer.

Here are some suggestions to get you started:



1

TAKE NOTE.

Now is the time to observe your landscape and see where you need to adjust for hotter weather. Monitor areas for changes in sun and shade and select plants and irrigation equipment that support your outdoor living goals.

2

RECYCLE AND REUSE.

Cool off quickly by freezing discarded water bottles and applying them to pulse points like wrists, the backs of knees, and the crooks of elbows. You can also use the upcycled icepacks to cool picnic lunches or put bottles upside down next to thirsty plants to water them.

3

MULCH, MULCH, MULCH.

Mulch helps soil retain water and nutrients as well as protects plants against extreme temperatures. Mulch also fights back weeds so you'll spend less time in the summer sun doing yard work!

4

KEEP YOUR COOL.

Just like people, plants need more water when it's hot. Stave off dehydration and save water indoors by closing window shades during the day and adjusting ceiling fans to move counterclockwise, creating a cooling downdraft.

5

MADE IN THE SHADE.

A shaded garden can help retain soil moisture and reduce water lost through transpiration. Use less water outdoors and keep you and your plants cool and productive by adding a shade sail or umbrella.

6

TAKE THE PLUNGE.

When the heat is unbearable, cool down quickly by putting your hands and feet in a bucket of cold water. Once you're comfortable, dump the water in container plants that require more water in the summer heat.